

**DEVICE FOR FACILITATING POTTY TRAINING
AND METHOD THEREFOR**

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 Field of the Invention:

 This invention relates generally to child development, and more specifically, to a device for facilitating potty training.

10 Description of Prior Art:

 Potty training may prove to be a stressful experience for young children. In order to ease the transition from using diapers to using the toilet, many parents/guardians employ reward systems to encourage their children. For
15 example, some parents/guardians may give the child a sticker or a treat after the child successfully uses the toilet. While these reward systems may provide motivation to a child, they do not assist the child with the actual task of using the toilet.

20 Various attempts have been made to assist a child with the task of using the toilet. U.S. Patent 4,744,113 issued to Kogut discloses a target made to be attached to the rim of a toilet. Only upon coming into contact with urine will a graphic design therein become visible. However, if one

of these targets is hit with a heavy stream of urine, the urine could splash off and cause a mess. Furthermore, these targets are only useful for a boy's urination. Boys, as well as girls, need assistance with using the toilet not
5 only for urination, but for bowel movements as well.

U.S. Patent 5,285,540 issued to Putz discloses a sheet that must be placed on a dry surface in the toilet and that must come into contact with urine in order to dissolve. Because the sheet must be placed on a dry surface, a piece
10 of toilet paper or other positioning means must first be placed between the sheet and the toilet water. This process would require the child to wait a longer period of time before being able to use the toilet.

U.S. Patent 5,117,515 to White, Jr. et al. discloses a
15 sheet of paper fiber stock material that will sink into the toilet water once urine is deposited onto it. This sheet of paper, however, would sink too quickly and would not serve its purpose as a target throughout the child's entire urination or bowel movement process.

20 U.S. Patent 6,183,850 B1 issued to Lauer discloses a flushable foam polymer target. Because the foam polymer target only partially dissolves in water, the remaining particles of the foam polymer target may be harmful to the environment and the surrounding population.

For example, Nevada's source of drinking water is Lake Mead. Nevada's sewer water is also emptied into Lake Mead. By flushing the foam polymer target down the toilet, particles from the target eventually end up in the lake.

- 5 After the foam polymer partially dissolves in the water, the remaining particles of the foam polymer remain in the water. Eventually, those foam polymer particles may end up in the community's drinking water.

Therefore a need existed to provide an improved device
10 and method for facilitating potty training. Preferably, the device and method encourages a child to urinate and/or perform bowel movements in a toilet. Further, preferably, the system and method are useful for both boys and girls alike. Still further, preferably, the device and method
15 are safe for the environment and surrounding population.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide a device and method for facilitating potty training.

- 20 It is a further object of the present invention to provide a device and method that employs a target at which a child may aim during urination and/or a bowel movement.

It is a still further object of the present invention

to provide a device and method for facilitating potty training that is useful for both boys and girls alike.

It is a yet further object of the present invention to provide a device and method for facilitating potty training
5 that is safe for the environment and surrounding population.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

In accordance with one embodiment of the present
10 invention, a device for facilitating potty training is disclosed. The device comprises at least one tissue, the at least one tissue being biodegradable, being semi-porous, being substantially flat so as to be placed proximate water contained within a toilet, and being substantially buoyant,
15 while at the same time being sufficiently rigid so as to be able to remain substantially buoyant after receiving at least one of urine and fecal matter of a child.

In accordance with another embodiment of the present invention, a method for facilitating potty training is
20 disclosed. The method comprises the steps of providing at least one tissue, the at least one tissue being biodegradable, being semi-porous, being substantially flat so as to be placed proximate water contained within a toilet, being substantially buoyant, while at the same

time being sufficiently rigid so as to be able to remain substantially buoyant after receiving at least one of urine and fecal matter of a child, and having at least one of a design and configuration adapted to encourage a child to
5 deposit at least one of urine and fecal matter on the tissue while the tissue being placed proximate the water contained within the toilet, placing the at least one tissue proximate the water contained within the toilet, and flushing the at least one tissue down the toilet after the
10 child has deposited at least one of urine and fecal matter on the at least one tissue.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a device for
15 facilitating potty training consistent with the present invention, shown having a bull's eye configuration and being placed in a toilet.

Figure 2 is a top view of a device for facilitating potty training consistent with the present invention, shown
20 having a star configuration and being placed in a toilet.

Figure 3 is a top view of a device for facilitating potty training consistent with the present invention, shown having a pumpkin configuration and placed in a toilet.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The novel features believed characteristic of the invention are set forth in the appended claims. The invention will best be understood by reference to the following detailed description of illustrated embodiments when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein like reference numerals and symbols represent like elements.

Referring to Figures 1-3, a device for facilitating potty training, hereinafter device for facilitating potty training 10, is shown. The device for facilitating potty training 10 comprises at least one tissue 12 that is biodegradable, semi-porous, and substantially flat so as to be placed proximate water 14 contained within a toilet 16. The tissue 12 is also substantially buoyant, while at the same time being sufficiently rigid so as to be able to remain substantially buoyant after receiving at least one of urine and fecal matter of a child.

In the preferred embodiment, the tissue 12 is 10 pound tissue, although substantial benefit may be derived from using 8 pound tissue. Preferably the tissue 12 has a configuration adapted to encourage a child to deposit at least one of urine and fecal matter on the tissue 12 while the tissue 12 is placed proximate the water 14 contained

within the toilet 16. The tissue 12 may appear in a bull's eye-configuration (shown in Figure 1), a star configuration (shown in Figure 2), or a pumpkin configuration (shown in Figure 3), although it should be clearly understood that
5 substantial benefit may be derived from using alternative configurations.

Statement of Operation

In order to operate the device for facilitating potty
10 training 10, a parent/guardian places the tissue 12 proximate the water 14 contained within the toilet 16. The parent/guardian then instructs the child to hit the tissue 12 with their urine or fecal matter. Upon completion, the parent/guardian will flush the tissue 12 along with the
15 urine and/or fecal matter down the toilet.

While the invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to preferred embodiments thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that the foregoing and other changes in form and details may be made
20 therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.